IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows, substituting any amended claim(s) for the corresponding pending claim(s):

Claims 1-22. (cancelled)

23. (Currently Amended) A method for managing Walsh Codes in a Code Division Multiple Access (CDMA) cellular wireless communication system, the method comprises:

allocating a number of Walsh Codes in the CDMA cellular wireless communication system to a group of cell(s) or sector(s);

setting a handoff participation limit to a maximum participation limit, where the handoff participation limit determines a maximum number of cells or sectors that may participate in handoff with any serviced mobile terminal;

when an available number of the number of Walsh Codes becomes less than a first Walsh Code availability threshold, reducing the ~~hand~~ handoff participation limit to a first participation limit that is less than the maximum participation limit;

when an available number of the number of Walsh Codes becomes less than a second Walsh Code availability threshold, that is less than the first Walsh Code availability threshold, reducing the handoff participation limit to a second participation limit that is less than the first participation limit; and

for any mobile terminal participating in handoff with a number of cells or sectors that exceeds the handoff participation limit, terminating forward link transmissions from a corresponding number of servicing cell(s) or sector(s) and releasing a corresponding number of Walsh Code(s).

24. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, wherein terminating forward link transmissions from a corresponding number of servicing cell(s)/sector(s) and releasing a corresponding number of Walsh Code(s) further comprises:

determining a weakest forward link serviced by a weakest cell or sector; and

terminating the weakest forward link serviced by the weakest cell or sector.

25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 24, wherein the weakest forward link is determined based upon the strength of corresponding pilot signals, as measured and reported by the mobile terminal.

26. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 25, wherein a plurality of reports of pilot signal strengths are used in conjunction with averaging operations to determine the weakest forward link.

27. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, wherein terminating forward link transmissions from a corresponding number of servicing cell(s)/sector(s) and releasing a corresponding number of Walsh Code(s) further comprises:

terminating a weakest forward link when the mobile terminal is in five-way hand-off; and

terminating two weakest forward links when the mobile terminal is in six-way hand-off.

28. (Previously Presented) A base station controller that supports Code Division Multiple Access (CDMA) operations for a group of cells or sectors, the base station controller comprises:

a Mobile Switching Center (MSC) interface that interfaces the base station controller to a MSC; at least one base station interface that interface the base station controller to a plurality of base stations; and

at least one digital processor coupled to the base station interface and to the MSC interface; and

a plurality of software instructions that are executed by the processor, the plurality of software instructions include:

software instructions that, upon execution by the processor, cause the base station controller to allocate a number of Walsh Codes in the CDMA cellular wireless communication system to the group of cells or sectors;

software instructions that, upon execution by the processor, cause the base station controller to set a handoff participation limit to a maximum participation limit, where the handoff participation limit determines a maximum number of cells or sectors that may participate in handoff with any serviced mobile terminal;

software instructions that, upon execution by the processor, cause the base station controller to, when an available number of the number of Walsh Codes becomes less than a first Walsh Code availability threshold, reduce the handoff participation limit to a first participation limit that is less than the maximum participation limit;

software instructions that, upon execution by the processor, cause the base station controller to, when an available number of the number of Walsh Codes becomes less than a second Walsh Code availability threshold, that is less than the first Walsh Code availability threshold, reduce the handoff participation limit to a second participation limit that is less than the first participation limit; and

software instructions that, upon execution by the processor, cause the base station controller to, for any mobile terminal participating in handoff with a number of cells or sectors that exceeds the handoff participation limit, terminate forward link transmissions from a corresponding number of servicing cell(s) or sector(s) and releasing a corresponding number of Walsh Code(s).

29. (Previously Presented) The base station controller of claim 28, wherein in terminating forward link transmissions from a corresponding number of servicing cell(s)/sector(s) and releasing a corresponding number of Walsh Code(s), the base station controller determines a respective weakest forward link for the mobile terminal and terminates the respective weakest forward link.

30. (Previously Presented) The base station controller of claim 29, wherein the base station controller determines the respective weakest forward link based upon the strength of corresponding pilot signals, as measured and reported by the mobile terminal.

31. (Previously Presented) The base station controller of claim 30, wherein a plurality of reports of pilot signal strengths are used in conjunction with averaging operations to determine the weakest forward link.

32. (Previously Presented) The base station controller of claim 28, wherein the base station controller operates consistent with at least one of IS-95A, IS-95B, 1xRTT and 1xEV-DO operating standards.